

The Doors of Perception: Consciousness and the Quantum World

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The next time people tell you “It’s all in your mind,” you may want to compliment them on their scientific and intellectual acumen. Once the domain of religion, philosophy and metaphysics, the power of consciousness and perception is becoming more obvious to scientists plumbing the depths of quantum physics. Seems that even on the level of the very, very small, the role of the observer is tantamount to the outcome of the results of an experiment.

It might, in fact, be the very foundation of reality itself.

Recall the famous words of French philosopher, mathematician and scientist Rene Descartes. “I think, therefore I am.” Descartes recognized that the act of thinking suggests proof of existence, of self-awareness. But I suggest that we take that sentiment one step further to explain the role of the observing, conscious mind in the macrocosmic and microcosmic.

“I observe, therefore you exist.”

We know from experiments with photons and other particles on the quantum level that the observer changes the outcome of the results. Until the moment of observation of the particle, there is no real particle to observe. Physicist Paul Davies writes in his book “Superforce” that “In the absence of an observation a quantum system will evolve in a certain way. When an observation is made, an entirely different type of change occurs. Just what produces this different behavior is not clear, but at least some physicists insist that it is explicitly caused by the mind itself.” This statement was written in 1984, and since then, more physicists and scientists have conceded the role of the mind in creating the physical reality we “observe” on a daily basis. More and more research is coming to the forefront every day that confirms that the outcomes of quantum phenomena can be modified by consciousness.

What is consciousness? A quick look at the dictionary turns up a variety of answers. “Awakened state; the awareness of self and of what one is doing and why; the totality of one’s thoughts, feelings and experiences; a state of knowing the self; cognizance.” Consciousness, then, is a state of awareness, of knowing that one exists. We possess consciousness when we are awake and aware to our own existence.

Consciousness is also described as the ability to think and perceive. Thoughts, perception, and consciousness are the key players in understanding the connections between the paranormal and the normal, just as they are the key players in determining the outcome of a quantum physics experiment. The non-locality experiments of Alain

Aspect and his team in 1982 proved that space is “non-local” and that the world is not made up of separate objects that, when put together, make the Universe as we know it. Instead, these groundbreaking experiments showed that the “observer” and the “object being observed” were connected and part of an indivisible whole, with everyone and everything affecting and influencing everything else.

Some physicists look to the realm of “superspace,” or the Zero Point Field as the home of the Cosmic Consciousness that observed, and continues to observe, the universe into being. Linked to this cosmic mind is the mind of the individual human, who, on a microcosmic scale, observes his or her own reality into being. And synching of vibrations and frequencies, whether those in the electromagnetic field or the human brain, can certainly lead to an experience of something beyond normal, waking consciousness. Physicist Amit Goswami, author of “Self-Aware Universe: How Consciousness Creates the Material World,” believes that the material world of quantum physics is only possibility, and that through the conversion of possibility into actuality, “consciousness creates the manifest world.” He suggests the universe is self-aware, but it is self-aware through us, through our individual consciousness. Goswami is one of many physicists working in the cutting edge field of “new science” or the science of consciousness and its role in physical, manifest reality. He points to the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle as the beginning of the “consciousness revolution” which based itself up on the idea that the observer affected the observed and launched a new direction of research that combined the world of matter with the world of mind.

Consciousness is the key, and the observer chooses the branch of experience. Physicist Brian Josephson states in his paper, “String Theory, Universal Mind and the Paranormal,” that “some aspects of mentality involve a realm of reality largely, but not completely, disconnected from the phenomena manifested in conventional physics.” He points to the informational aspect of life and there is a biological character involved with the informational processing of organisms, one that sees life “able to shape its environment in a partnership with it.” Two life forms sharing their mental states could account for such phenomena as ESP and telepathy. Josephson describes a potential “shared mental bubble,” the contents of which are available to both life forms involved. “The point to bear in mind,” he continues, “is that in the biological realm the phenomena that manifest are governed not only by what is physically possible, but also by which of those physically permitted possibilities are likely to be of overall benefit to the organism concerned.”

When I read that quote, I thought of the work done by many serious parapsychologists that suggested greater levels of psi phenomena are reported under laboratory testing conditions when the research subjects have a vested interest in the outcome of the experiments. Implied meaning can often make a big difference. Richard S. Broughton, scientist and former President of the Parapsychological Association, wrote in his presidential address in 1987 about the importance of meaning when working with test subjects. He proposed that researchers ask the question “whom does psi serve?” when working with subjects, pointing to the “need-serving” nature of psi phenomena and how it might affect the skill levels of individuals.

Obviously, if there is a greater need, often survival-based, for psi, then the psi will show up in a greater amount in the subject. Broughton stated, "Quite a few experiments in ESP and PK can be read as providing support for both the need-serving character and its operation at an unconscious level." Test results seem to imply that there are psychological and biological implications to paranormal phenomenon, and that their functioning significance must be taken into account.

Thus, if one person has a greater need to display PK, they will display it. But that does not mean psi only shows up when there is a desperate need for it, Broughton continues, but that researchers must keep in mind that "probably the primary function of psi is to help the individual survive when faced with serious threats to health and safety, and to gain a competitive advantage in the struggle for survival."

Do we, then, have a choice to be psychic or to see a ghost? Perhaps we do, but on a subconscious level. And when that choice is made on a conscious level, can our brains then "synch" with the exact frequency necessary to perceive what is considered beyond normal perception?

PEAR, the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research laboratory, is deeply involved in studying the idea that thoughts can affect the exterior world, and that consciousness can influence other objects and organisms. Their work into remote viewing, and the power of conscious thought to affect random number generators, is available for viewing on their website, www.princeton.edu/~pear/ and strongly points to the ability of some subjects to transmit and receive information via the mind alone. In a PEAR paper titled "A Modular Model of Mind/Matter Manifestations," the researchers have created a model that proposes mind and matter unite with and influence each other in the deep levels of the unconscious. In other papers, they extend their research to conclude that we can alter our consciousness to therefore alter the filters of perception we use to "see" and experience our reality.

Russell Targ and Elizabeth Rauscher worked with researchers around the world to carry out remote viewing experiments that convinced them of the evidence for a "mode of perception, or direct knowing of distant events and objects." Their findings, summarized in "The Speed of Thought: Investigation of a Complex Space-Time Metric to Describe Psychic Phenomena" proposes a geometrical model of space-time that is eight-dimensional and allows for a connection of zero distance between points in the "complex manifold." This model, they state, describes the major elements of experimental parapsychology, yet is consistent with the structure of modern physics.

Rauscher and Targ delved into the connections between our awareness and our use of psi abilities, focusing on data gained from over a century of laboratory experiments into various phenomena, starting with the usual objection of science towards psi – the fact that it appears to conflict with the known laws of physics. Their theoretical model finds areas of agreement between physics and psi, using six spatial dimensions and two temporal coordinates. They present their "metric of complex eight-space" as the measure of the

manner in which one can “physically or psychically move along a world line of space and time.” For remote viewing and precognition to work, they state, the experienced distance between subject and target can be zero, and their proposed eight-space can “always provide a path, or world line in space and time, which connects the viewer to a remote target, so that his awareness experiences zero spatial and/or temporal distance in the metric.”

The authors believe psi abilities are “fundamental to our understanding of consciousness itself.” In fact, they believe that psi functioning might even be the means by which our consciousness makes itself known to the internal and external world, and to our selves, our own individual awareness. They point to experiments involving hundreds of subjects in the areas of precognition and remote viewing, where results showed strong evidence for the existence of knowledge of the future, as well as to the experiments of Dr. Dean Radin, a Senior Scientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences.

Radin, author of “The Conscious Universe” and “Entangled Minds,” performed experiments measuring the “orienting response,” or the “fight of flight reactions” of subjects exposed to pictures that were scary or distressing. The interesting thing is, the physiology of the person viewing the picture actually changed a few seconds before they saw the picture, showing a direct correlation between these physical reactions and premonition – the inner knowing that a future event is going to occur. Intentions somehow have the ability to transcend time and literally work backwards to influence the past, or forward to predict the future. Can our own future self be influencing us, helping to make our decisions that come in the form of premonitions?

The human brain acts as an amazing filter, accepting and rejecting information and stimuli based upon our survival needs. You could say we operate on a strictly “need-to-know” basis, with our brain acting as the sentry at the gate, refusing entry to anything that we just plain don’t need to understand. People who are able to shift their perception thus shift their “need-to-know” basis to include things they did not perceive before. If you don’t need to see it, you won’t see it.

On the other hand, phenomena such as ghosts, UFOs and other entities that take on a nearly-physical form may be coming into our consciousness without our consent, simply because they have found the operating mechanism for being able to do so. And, on some level, we must be consenting to perceive their presence, just as we tend to see, or not see, what we want to see in daily life. Think about the conditioning behavior we exhibit, where we are not consciously aware of why we repeat a bad habit or make the same mistake over and over again. Just as we are blind to parts of our own behavior and identity, we are blind to parts of the “spectrum” of reality.

I can’t help but recall the quote by William Blake, “If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.”

2,000 WORDS APPROX.

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